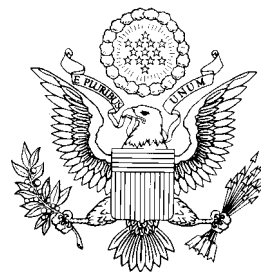


ARTICLE ALERT

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民主与全球问题 Democracy and Global Issues

1. CHILD LABOR: WHY WE CAN'T KICK OUR ADDICTION

Bahree, Megha

Forbes, February 25, 2008, pp. 72-79

Although there are national and international laws against it, child labor remains a global phenomenon. Companies with stores in the U.S. such as GapKids and Macy's, Ikea, Lowe's and Home Depot all claim to have strict policies against selling products made by children, yet such products continue to appear on their shelves. As Bahree writes: "There are many links in the supply chain, and even a well-intentioned importer can't police them all." Middlemen find ways to duck responsibility by removing labels that identify a product's country of origin. Moreover, there are few people to monitor overseas operations to insure that abuses do not occur. The UN International Labor Organization guesses that there are 218 million child laborers worldwide; most of them work in agriculture. The Asia-Pacific region claims the greatest share of underage workers (122 million) followed by sub-Saharan Africa (49 million). Notable offenders: Cambodia, Mali, Burkina Faso, Bolivia and Guatemala. Bahree writes that child labor is "a fact of a global economy, and will continue to be, as long as Americans (and Europeans) demand cheap goods — and incomes in emerging economies remain low."

2. "THE CONNECTION HAS BEEN RESET"

Fallows, James

Atlantic Monthly, March 2008

Foreign visitors attending the Olympics in Beijing may be pleasantly surprised by what will seem to be easy access to the Internet. They shouldn't be deceived, says Fallows, Atlantic national correspondent reporting from Beijing. "What the Olympic-era visitors will be discovering is not the absence of China's electronic control but its new refinement — and a special Potemkin-style unfettered access that will be set up just for them, and just for the length of their stay," Fallows writes. China's "great firewall" may seem crude to outsiders, but it is surprisingly effective. Moreover, it is just one part of a larger, complex structure of monitoring and censorship. While the Chinese government's censorship of the Internet is extensive, any of China's 210 million online users can circumvent it using a virtual private network (VPN), but at a cost of about 10 cents per day — a couple days' work for a young Chinese academic and a week's take-home pay for a Chinese factory worker. Fallows writes, "What the government cares about is making the quest of information just enough of a nuisance that people generally won't bother." With a rich information environment inside China, the average Chinese person will find searching for external information not worth the trouble and expense. Fallows asks the question: "How long can the regime control what people are allowed to know, without the people caring enough to object?" And he answers: "On current evidence, for quite a while."

3. MASHUPS AS DIY TOOLS

Gordon-Murnane, Laura

Online, vol. 32, no. 1, January/February 2008, pp. 14-17

The author believes that content is not only critical to the information professional's work but that it is also growing exponentially. With more Web 2.0 tools appearing daily, this data explosion is just the tip of the iceberg as tools for entry, use, reuse, distribution, and redistribution are making possible things that previously were too expensive or difficult. More exciting is the movement toward blended search results, which allow data to be interpreted differently than when it is presented as straight text. Blended content is not limited to search engine results and news sites — it is also happening with mashups, which combine data from more than one source to create a new tool, resource, widget, and ultimately a new experience. Two such mashups would be HealthMap, which tracks the current global state of infectious diseases and their effect on human and animal health, and ChicagoCrime.org, a mashup of crime data from the Chicago Police Department and Google Maps, showing crimes reported in the past two years for a certain zip code. However, the world of mashups is only just beginning, so librarians and information professionals need to be involved and active in using, sharing, creating, and helping others find the tools they need for personal and professional uses.

4. NONPROFIT NEWS

Guensburg, Carol

American Journalism Review, vol. 30, no. 1, February/March 2008, pp. 26-33

With traditional news organizations continuing to trim their budgets and reduce their staffs, long-term, labor-intensive investigative and enterprise journalism are more frequently made possible by funding from foundations and nonprofits, writes Guensburg, herself a former newspaper reporter who now writes for a nonprofit organization. The foundations are interested in compensating for what they see as diminished coverage of civic issues. And as paid advertising abandons print journalism for the Internet, news organizations are eager for new revenue. In 2005, U.S. foundations granted \$158 million for media and communications. Journalism's funders include Carnegie, Ford and Pew Charitable Trusts. Knight, the leading journalism funder overall, announced more than \$21 million in journalism grants in 2006 and more than \$50 million in 2007. "Done right, the journalism-funder relationship benefits both the parties as well as the public they aim to serve," Guensburg writes. But done wrong, it raises concerns about editorial objectivity. Some editors will accept grant money for training, but decline grant support for newsroom projects, fearing the merest hint of outside influence. Others see little difference between advertiser influence and donor influence on editorial sanctity.

5. A CHANGING CLIMATE: THE ROAD AHEAD FOR THE UNITED STATES

Stern, Todd; Antholis, William

Washington Quarterly, vol. 31, no. 1, Winter 2007-2008, pp. 175-187

The next U.S. president must adopt an aggressive policy to address global climate change, according to these authors who are with the Center for American Progress and the Brookings Institution respectively. They recommend that the president engage in a "layered diplomacy," with a focus on a core group of nations responsible for a majority of world emissions. The next American chief executive should also step up the nation's engagement with the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change and China, soon to surpass the

United States as the world's greatest emitting nation. The G-8 group is the model for one multilateral forum suggested by the authors to focus on global warming. They recommend the creation of an E-8 to address critical ecological dangers involving executive level representation from Brazil, China, the European Union, India, Japan, Russia, South Africa, and the United States. The authors' most emphatic point is that the threats of global warming are too imperative to ignore: "These daunting risks should impel us to take aggressive action to insure the world against grave harm", they write.

6. ENERGY AND DEMOCRACY: THE EUROPEAN UNION'S CHALLENGE

Wood, Steve

Current History, vol. 107, no. 707, March 2008, pp. 133-138

The author, a research fellow at the School of Political and International Studies at Flinders University in Adelaide, Australia, writes that the European Union's dependence upon imported energy supplies is compromising a central feature of the EU's image, that of a committed promoter of democratization and civic freedoms. As with the U.S., many of the EU's energy suppliers are countries with autocratic regimes and poor human-rights records, with the state having a controlling interest in the resources and using it for geopolitical ends. The EU's growing energy dependence means that its suppliers have little incentive to carry out democratic reforms. Wood notes that Russia is central in the EU's quandary, as several of the former Soviet republics that the EU is trying to influence are themselves dependent on Russian energy supplies. The author asserts that the EU can do little to oblige undemocratic energy producers to change without the backing of the U.N. and the U.S.

经济贸易 Economics and Trade

7. MICKEY GOES TO WASHINGTON

Birnbaum, Jeffrey

Washington Post Magazine, February 17, 2008, pp. 10-15, 22-26

Today, there are at least 261,000 lobbyists, twice as many as eight years ago, while fees paid to individual registered lobbyists have also doubled to more than \$2 billion a year. To illustrate the pervasiveness of lobbying in Washington, the author, business writer for the Washington Post, discusses the strategy the travel industry is using to bring foreign tourists to the United States and how its lobbyists are trying to get the U.S. Congress to foot the marketing bill. As the events of Sept. 11 recede and tourism has started to come back, the industry's main lobby, the Travel Industry Association, has decided it needed federal assistance; the agenda of the Discover America Partnership is to persuade the federal government to fund a \$200 million tourism marketing campaign.

8. AN EMPTY REVOLUTION: THE UNFULFILLED PROMISES OF HUGO CHAVEZ

Rodriguez, Francisco

Foreign Affairs, Vol. 87, No. 2, March-April 2008

According to Rodríguez, former chief economist of the Venezuelan National Assembly and now an assistant professor at Wesleyan University, the facts show that President Hugo Chavez has accomplished no more than previous Venezuelan governments in reducing poverty yet has managed to wreck the economy. While surging oil prices have kept Venezuela's economy and tax revenue expanding, inflation has accelerated and delivery of basic foodstuffs and public services is failing. Under Chavez, the government has increased spending sharply, nationalized key sectors, regulated prices and wages, and eroded private property rights. Meanwhile, it has replaced previous social programs with high-profile initiatives aimed at specific problems in poor neighborhoods. Yet official statistics show no improvement in Venezuelans' well-being and, in fact, a higher proportion of underweight babies, households lacking running water, and families living in dwellings with earthen floors. Independent research shows negligible improvement in literacy, rebutting the government's claim. Reckless government spending and expansion of the money supply coupled with falling oil output resulting from gross mismanagement foretell far worse economic and political conditions for Venezuela.

9. FAST 50: THE WORLD'S MOST INNOVATIVE COMPANIES

Salter, Chuck, Et Al.

Fast Company, no. 123, March 2008, pp. 73-117

Writers from the magazine Fast Company identify 50 companies that are moving forward in innovative ways. Some companies are included on the list for their new patents granted this year, others for innovative management techniques, or new products brought to market. Tata made the list for trying to bring a \$2500 car to India and GE for re-engineering the CF34 jet engine. Communications and computer firms are represented as well as niche retailers. Google is first on the list and the authors describe what makes Google is an innovative company through profiles of Google managers.

10. IF THE ECONOMY'S SO BAD, WHY IS THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE SO LOW?

Rebecca M.Blank

Testimony to the Joint Economic Committee, March 7 2008

There is much current talk about recession and a wide variety of economic indicators are signaling a major economic slowdown... Yet, the unemployment rate has remained relatively low in recent months, at or below 5%... Professor Rebecca M. Blank wants to argue that this low unemployment rate is somewhat misleading, because the composition of those in the labor market is different than in the past... Rebecca Blank is the Henry Carter Adams Professor of Public Policy and Professor of Economics, University of Michigan, where she also serves as co-director of the National Poverty Center. She is currently on leave as the Robert V. Kerr Visiting Fellow at Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C.

11. CHANGING THE POLITICAL CLIMATE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Daschle, Tom

Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, vol. IX, no. 1, Winter/Spring 2008, pp. 93-101

The former Democratic senator from South Dakota, now with the Center for American Progress, believes that the United States must act with urgency to lead the international response to the threat of climate change. However, Daschle argues that the single biggest obstacle to implementing a comprehensive climate change policy is the lack of political will in Washington, especially among the administration officials responsible for implementing it who seem to have ceded leadership to the European Union, isolating the U.S. in the process. The next U.S. president, along with facing other important global and domestic challenges such as reforming the health care system and stopping Iran's nuclear program, faces the emerging consequences of climate change and the looming deadline of the 2012 expiration of phase I of the Kyoto Protocol. By leading the international response to the threat of climate change, the U.S. will be more environmentally and economically secure but also better positioned to lead the world on other pressing challenges.

国际安全 International Security

12. WHAT MAKES A TERRORIST

Krueger, Alan

American, November/December 2007

Public policymakers have been grappling for decades trying to understand what it takes to make a terrorist so that effective anti-terrorism and counterterrorism measures can be developed and implemented. One of the most popular explanations is that terrorism is caused by economic deprivation and a lack of education, which creates the growth media for extremism that leads to terrorism. Princeton economics professor Alan Krueger has recently completed research that indicates that neither economic deprivation nor a lack of education are serious contributing factors. Krueger's research indicates that consistent with the work on international terrorist incidents, countries with fewer civil liberties and political rights were more likely to be the birthplaces of foreign terrorists. Geographic distance is also a factor. Most terrorists come from nearby nations, he says. Krueger says that the evidence suggests that terrorists care about influencing political outcomes, and are often motivated by geopolitical grievances.

13. U.S. AFRICA COMMAND: A NEW STRATEGIC PARADIGM?

McFate, Sean

Military Review, vol. 88, no. 1, January-February 2008, pp. 10-21

McFate, an African security expert, says that the theme of partnership is heavily engrained in all discussions about the U.S. military's newest command – that would be partnering with African nations, non-governmental and private voluntary organizations, and inter-governmental entities including the Departments of State, Homeland Security, Justice and Treasury. Why AFRICOM now? The author points to a confluence of reasons including Africa's increased geopolitical importance, the need for counterweights against terrorism and drug, human and small-arms trafficking as well as competition with China for influence and access to natural resources. There is also the recognition that while African military forces are more than willing to participate in regional organizations such as the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, they may “lack the

command, training, equipment, logistics and institutional infrastructure required for complex peacekeeping.” He also says the new command offers the opportunity to focus on conflict prevention vs. conflict reaction. By focusing on pre-conflict operations, AFRICOM will help prevent problems from escalating into crises and “crises from becoming conflicts.” This vision will be aided by AFRICOM’s structure which “will be the most civilian-heavy unified command in history” with civilians filling key decision-making slots. To succeed, he writes, AFRICOM must embrace a new paradigm “that regards security and development as inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing.”

14. "NEW FIGHTING POWER!" JAPAN'S GROWING MARITIME CAPABILITIES AND EAST ASIAN SECURITY

Samuels, Richard J.

International Security, Vol. 32, No. 3, Winter 2007, pp. 84-112

Following its World War II debacle, the Japanese military has been characterized as a "self-defense" force, and has never been seen as a serious military player in world affairs. In fact, pacificism was enshrined in the post-War Japanese constitution. Nonetheless, the Japanese in recent years have been quietly modernizing and strengthening their Coast Guard, and are using the words "New Fighting Power" to describe it. Describing the enhanced Coast Guard as "stealthy," the author asserts it now performs a quasi-military, quasi-police function. As well as law enforcement, the newly empowered JCG is tasked with asserting Japan's maritime sovereignty claims, and may ultimately lead to Japan playing a counter-terrorist role in South Asia. In terms of joint exercises with regional coast guards, it is already playing a wider security role in its region. So far, its neighbors have not objected, and this tactful assertion of military capability in time may bolster the Japanese public's willingness to support higher defense expenditures.

15. THE TRANSATLANTIC TURNAROUND

Kupchan, Charles

Current History, vol. 107, no.707, March 2008 pp. 139-141

The author, professor of international affairs at Georgetown University and a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, notes that relations between the United States and Europe hit rock bottom after the 2003 invasion of Iraq, raising the prospect of an irreparable transatlantic rift. Kupchan writes that, although the war won support from some European governments, it was staunchly opposed by many of the continent’s citizens. The author predicts “an ebullient transatlantic reunion will be in store for January 2009, but that’s when the hard realities of transatlantic cooperation might set in”. Kupchan believes that both the U.S. and Europe realize that they need each other for the foreseeable future, but that “the sobering news is that transforming this recognition into concrete partnership will remain difficult, no matter who holds power on the two sides of the Atlantic”.

16. US AND THEM: THE ENDURING POWER OF ETHNIC NATIONALISM

Muller, Jerry Z.

Foreign Affairs, Vol. 87, No. 2, March-April 2008

According to Muller, professor of history at the Catholic University of America, persistent ethnic nationalism does not happen by chance; rather, it is inevitable in the continued development of nation-states. Ethnic separation into different states has economic and cultural costs, besides bloodshed that has cost million of lives since the 19th century. Yet the expanding harmony of Europe since World War II represents not failure of ethnic nationalism but its success, having removed sources of conflict both within and between countries. "The fact that ethnic and state boundaries now largely coincide has meant that there are fewer disputes over borders or expatriate communities," Muller says, "leading to the most stable territorial configuration in European history." In existing multiethnic countries where ethnic violence erupts, partition into separate nation-states may be the most humane lasting solution.

美国社会及价值观 U.S. Society and Values

17. HEALTHY SUCCESS

Rojas, Marcela

Hispanic, March 2007, pp. 56-59

Inner-city hospitals in major metropolitan areas in the U.S. are often underfunded and burdened with a disproportionate number of low-income patients with chronic health problems. The Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center in the South Bronx section of New York City is a remarkable exception, with efficient and high-quality service in a neighborhood of predominantly Latino and African-American households, with some of the highest incidences in the nation of health problems such as obesity, diabetes, asthma and HIV/AIDS. The article profiles the hospital's executive director, Jose Sanchez, who has overseen major facility upgrades and spearheaded outreach and public education programs.

18. ONE NATION UNDER ELVIS: AN ENVIRONMENTALISM FOR US ALL

Solnit, Rebecca

Orion, March/April 2008

Solnit, a journalist and author, uses American country music to illustrate the disdain that many in the U.S. environmentalist movement have had toward minorities, the poor and many rural dwellers. She notes that this elitism has turned away many segments of America that would otherwise have been natural allies and played into the hands of entrenched economic interests. The potential for a broad-based environmental movement was thwarted by the anti-communism and anti-labor union sentiment of the post-World War II era, and was not helped by the culture clash that erupted in the 1960s; Solnit writes that the environmental justice movement has set out to rectify that. She writes that environmental movement's founding father, John Muir, who himself grew up on a farm in Wisconsin, "did not so much flee the farm for the wilderness as invent wilderness as a counter-image to the farm on which his brutal father nearly worked him to death." The ethos that nature is a place where one vacations or retreats to, but where one does not work or live, has colored the outlook of the U.S. environmental movement ever since.

19. HOOP DREAMS

Euchner, Charles

American, vol. 2, no. 1, January-February 2008, pp. 26-34

With powerful global marketing, the National Basketball Association (NBA) is pushing basketball past soccer in its quest to become the world's most popular sport. Basketball started on an international level in 1932 with the formation of the International Basketball Federation. Over 200 national federations are now members, organized since 1989 into five zones or "commissions": Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania. This has been helped considerably by the recruitment of foreign players to play on American teams. Before 1992, there were fewer than a dozen foreign-born players in the NBA. Soon it increased to over eighty-one foreign-born players from thirty-five different countries and territories. Only two teams lacked a foreign player, and the NBA champion San Antonio Spurs boasted three starters born outside the U.S. By the 2005 season, twenty-seven of the thirty NBA teams had at least one international player on their opening-day rosters. Perhaps the most famous foreign born player is Yao Ming, from China, the first international player who had not played college basketball in the U.S. and the number-one 2002 draft pick when he was selected by the Houston Rockets. In 2007, NBA teams selected fifteen players from thirteen countries.

20. MOBILIZING MILLENNIALS

Draut, Tamara Et Al.

American Prospect, Special Report, vol. 19, no. 3, March 2008, pp. A1-A23

Today's young adults are the first generation whose living standards may decline from their parents'. There is abundant evidence of declining economic opportunity and growing insecurity, with widespread debt and the shrinking number of jobs paying decent wages for most without advanced degrees. Most political campaign rhetoric has been aimed at middle-aged and retired voters, while the concerns of the young are largely confined to the margins. However, there is growing political activism, with 43 percent of young people ages 18-29 having voted this year, and an increasing interest in trade unionism. In this special series, eight authors appraise the gloomy outlook for today's young people, and call for a sustained commitment to improve their economic horizons.